

NSC BRIEFING

9 November 1954

CHINESE OFFSHORE ISLANDS

- I. Bad weather helped keep Tachens situation fairly quiet past week.
 - A. Typhoons no longer factor, however.
- II. In past week Communist planes bombed Ichiang, 8 miles NW Tachens; reportedly hit Yushans, 30 miles NE Tachens.
 - A. Nationalist planes 2-4 November bombed Communist positions on Toumen, north of Ichiang, but artillery there continues hit Ichiang.
 - B. This first report Communist pressure on Yushan.
- III. Sightings of Communist gunboats and patrol vessels in Tachens area doubled since 1 November.
 - A. No reports naval clashes past

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B. Nationalists keeping 7-8 ships
in Tachens area.

IV. Several possible forms Communist action
against Tachens.

A. Could probably make Tachens
untenable by sustained air attacks.

B. Could take Ichiang, then harass
Upper and Lower Tachens with
artillery.

C. Could take lesser islands in Tachen
defense command--Yushan, Pishan,
Nanchi.

D. This might panic Nationalists
into withdrawal from main islands
of group.

V. In Quemoy area, Communist activity
seems largely defensive.

A. Artillery duels continue, without
much damage.

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B. Only 50,000 Communist troops
in Amoy area now--would need
150,000 to invade Quemoy.

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C. Communists remain capable taking
any or all offshore islands
against Nationalist opposition
alone.

VII. Peiping's plans almost sure to be
affected by indications of US intentions--
both US naval movements and current
news stories from Washington.

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A. These stories say US is negotiating mutual defense pact with Nationalists on understanding Taipei avoid provocative attacks on mainland.

B. Stories speculate on US policy re offshore islands.

VIII. In first Communist comment on these stories, Peiping repeated standard line that US is pushing ahead talks for "treaty of military aggression."

A. Peiping's comment did not mention offshore islands.

IX. Difficult judge whether offshore island situation immediately affected by these stories.

A. Communists might conclude US very reluctant become involved.

B. They may therefore judge US bluffing in moving strong naval forces northeast of Formosa

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- C. They cannot be certain, however, US will not intervene.
- D. On balance, seems likely Communists will make further efforts determine whether US bluffing, before attempting invasion of major offshore islands.
- E. While continuing limited military action, possibly including capture some smaller islands, Communists expected wait for further news stories, official US statements, information from diplomatic sources, leaks from Taipei.

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